The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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Grace, the little Gleaner.

THE reapers now, for many a day,
Have toiled amid the corn,
Till safely to the barn away
The latest sheaf is borne.

And in the broad fields now so bare,
But lately clothed with grain,
From towns and villages repair
The busy gleaner-train.

Hearty and strong the children ply
Their search the cornfields through:
The aged with a weary sigh,
A slower quest pursue.

Now from the house comes little Grace,—
A would-be gleaner she,—
With sunny locks and sunny face,
As busy as a bee.

She gleans that she may swell the share
Of yonder aged dame,
Whose failing steps with toilsome care,
Can scarce support her frame.

To her—with smile so bright it cheers
The aged eyes to see—
She brings her bunch of wheaten ears,
And trips across the lea.

With merry song she trips away;
To her 'tis pleasant fun:
But to the aged dame to day
'Tis one more handful won.

No selfish heart can e'er conceive
How much of joy is theirs
Who seek by kindness to relieve
Or soothe another's cares.

Not all can glean amid the corn;
But all who *try* can find
Some way to cheer a heart forlorn,
Some way of being kind.

[*London*] *Children's Friend.*

Children, make your mother happy;
Prompt obedience cheer the heart,
While a willful disobedience
Pierces like a poisoned dart.

For the Myrtle.

Starting in Life.

A STORY FOR THE YOUNG.

[It may interest you, dear young readers, to know at the outset, that the main incidents which I have woven together in the following story actually occurred, and that the hero of them all, now a stout middle aged man, with grown up boys of his own, still lives and often narrates to them the story of his "Start in Life."]

IN a log hut, in the northern part of Vermont, there stood one wintry night, a group of thinly clad, shivering children huddling together near a few green logs on the hearthstone which were making feeble attempts to burn. The largest of the children, a girl ten years of age, held in her arms a feeble, sickly looking infant, while the mother, a pale, sad eyed woman stood at a table near them, preparing their simple evening meal. At this moment the outer door was opened and shut with a slam, and her eldest child, a boy fourteen years of age, stepped into the room, his young face aglow with suppressed excitement and passion.

"Why, what in the world is the matter, David?" said his mother, turning towards him and laying her hand carressingly on his shoulder.

"Oh, botheration! Matter enough, I should think. You know that I promised to go and work for Ira Bird last week, and now father says I shall not go, and that he will flog me if I do. I tell you, mother, I am getting rather too old to be flogged, especially for trying to work, and I can't stand it any longer. I am going to run away this very night before father gets home."

"Going to run away? Oh David, David, has it come to this?" said the poor mother, sinking wearily into a chair, while tears gathered in her eyes and her whole frame trembled with agitation.

Poor David was a resolute boy, and his lines had not fallen in pleasant places. He had endured hardships and privations which seldom come to childhood and they had matured him beyond his years. But the flush of passion on his face changed to an expression of the keenest sorrow when he saw his mother weeping.

Stooping down he kissed her pallid cheek and told her that it was for her sake alone that he wished to leave home, that he could not endure to see her and the children suffering for food and clothing while there was a possibility of relieving them by going where he could find work; and that of course if he could not gain his father's consent he must go without.

Thus soothing and caressing her in his tender, boyish way, he softened the keen pang which his first words had given her, and after awhile she sent him to one of their neighbors for some milk, telling him that while he was gone she would try and think it over calmly. As David left the house in compliance with her request, poor Mrs. Demming took the little wailing, sickly infant in her arms and sat down by the fire trying to decide what was her duty in this new perplexity. Trying to think! If she could only stop thinking, she sometimes said to herself. If she could only forget the wretched struggle with poverty that had been hers for the last fourteen years! and not only poverty, but worse than all, the neglect and abuse of a drunken husband; for the dram shop had been the ruin of John Demming, and rum, that terrible foe to woman's peace had transformed him from a high spirited, proud young man to a miserable sot, whose very footstep was a dread and terror to his family. The pleasant, comfortable home to which he took her on their wedding day had gone long ago, little by little the household furniture was dispersed of to satisfy his craving for liquor, until now a small log hut on a side hill was their only shelter, with poor children younger than David to be provided for. There they stood by her side now; four shivering little things whose piteous, appealing faces stirred her tender heart to its very depths; no chance of her forgetting their misery; no rest for her weary head and brain. David had all along tried in his boyish way to make life easier for his mother; but his father, naturally arbitrary and overbearing in his disposition, had become more so by his intemperate habits, and seemed to take spiritual delight in thwarting all David's efforts towards self support except after his own impracticable ideas; and because he had an old grudge against Ira Bird, one of their neighbors, who had offered to hire David, to work for him, he refused to let him go, thus arrousing all the slumbering distorted and outraged feelings of the boy, until he finally resolved to break away from a restraint so unjust, and seek his fortune elsewhere.

Of all this the mother was thinking, as she sat by the fire this December night. The wind whistled dismally about their poor little dwelling, stealing in through every crevice in the floor and walls, and poor Mrs. Demming shivered from head to foot, with cold and fatigue and nervous anxiety. In her heart she believed it was best for her boy to go away as he proposed. There was really no chance for him to better himself by staying there, and if he went, he might become a rich and successful man. Other boys, going away from home, had done well; Why shouldn't David? But then, how would he meet the temptations of a new life? Out from the shelter of her love and her restraining influence, would he not be lost *forever*?

The poor neglected wife, the desolate but loving mother, rocked to and fro in her chair, trying to still the cries of her wailing infant, and more than all, to hush the wild tumult in her own heart, till she heard David's returning footsteps, and he stood before her once more as it waiting for her to speak.

She lifted her tearful eyes to his face. The features that met her gaze were fair and symmetrical like that of his father's, when she first learned to love him; the same fine, intellectual forehead, the dark eyes, the firm, handsome mouth. But in the boy, there was a look of energy and strength of purpose that promised well for the future and the mother felt that she could trust him and that to oppose him would be useless.

"Not to-night, David, I can't let you go to-night," she said at last; "Let us sleep under the same roof once more, and to-morrow, I will do what I can for you, my poor boy." So he sat down by her side and long after the other children were asleep, they talked together of the future. He, with all the ardor of enthusiasm of youth; She, with a mother's tender, loving anxiety. Not till he heard his father's uncertain steps at the

door, did he quit her side. Then kissing her fondly, he crept up into the loft which he called his bed room, and laid down to rest. There was no cloud over his boyish vision; all seemed as clear and bright to him, as the shining of the stars that winter night. Looking up between the rough boards which covered his humble room, he could see them twinkling above him, and as his eyelids closed in slumber, their still, calm light, seemed to rest upon him like a benediction.

A Word by the Way.

Two friends met, unexpectedly, upon a railway train—a young, earnest woman, and a wise old man.

The station where they were to separate was near, and without delay, the younger brought forward, in her quick, decisive way, a difficulty which pressed upon her heart.

"I am discouraged with my work in my Sunday-school class."

"And not the first who has been. But why?"

"I labor in vain, and spend my strength for naught.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing."

"It is both prophecy and promise, I know. Yet I wait in vain for any sight of my sheaves."

"Nevertheless, hold fast to the promise. Let me give you just one thought—only the end of a thread; unravel it yourself. The thought is this: the resurrection element in truth. Have you counted upon that?

"It is well to plant the seed carefully, yet it is not that which insures its glorified uprising. The property lies within the seed itself. God put it there. Remember, then, that as you sow the immortal words of the Bible, you plant no dead, inert matter. The resurection power is there. For years it may lie dormant. Your own eyes may never see flower or fruit. But some time, according to its set season, the 'deathless principle' will arise. God takes the responsibility of that. Rest there."

"This is, indeed, a thread to unravel."

"Add to it another—these bold, determined words; are they not vivid as a picture? They will bear much looking at: 'For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth from out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it.'"

"I thank you. Here is my station. I will try to unravel this thread in my experience."—*S. S. World.*

Picking Blackberries.

BESSIE likes blackberries. See how good they taste to her as she puts them, one by one, in her mouth!

She does not see what the vines have so many little prickles all over them for. She tried to pick some berries, and scratched her arm so that she jumped to get away; but the vines stuck to her dress, and held her so tight that she could not get away from them.

The more she tried to get them off, the more they clung to her. Lucy could not help laughing at first to see Bessie struggling to get away from the blackberry-vines. Then she told her to keep still, and she would let her loose.

So Lucy took hold of the vines very carefully, and pulled them off, one after the other, from Bessie's dress. Then she found a good seat for her, and told her to sit down, and she would pick some berries for her.

Lucy picked a lot in her apron. You may be sure Bessie soon forgot her scratches in eating the sweet, juicy berries. I hope the berries did not stain their aprons or their dresses.

Lucy is always good to Bessie, just as almost all girls are to their younger sisters.

Bessie began last spring to go to Sunday-school. She likes to go so well that she goes every Sunday, rain or shine. Here is the verse she learned last Sunday:—

"How good is God the fruit to give
That hangs on vine or tree?
I'll love him dearly while I live,
For all his love to me."

HE that hath tasted of the bitterness of sin, will fear to commit it, and he that hath felt the sweetness of mercy will fear to offend it.—*Charnock.*

THE good may well be termed the salt of the earth; for where there is no integrity, there can be no confidence; and where there is no confidence, there can be no unanimity.

For the Myrtle.

Little Sister.

"WHAT's your name my pretty dear?"
And the stranger stooped and kissed her;
Up she looked without a fear,
"Name is Little Sister."

Little Sister! ah, what store
Of meaning in the name was hidden,
Love, that filled its place twice o'er,
Care, that watched unbidden.

Though for her no mother smiled,
She had never known or missed her,
She was not an orphan child,
She was Little Sister.

H. A. B.

For the Myrtle.

Samson's Riddle.

THE children had been telling riddles all the evening. They had told all they knew and guessed until nothing remained either to be guessed or given up. Then they appealed to the older people.

"Tell us a riddle, Aunt Letty," But Aunt Letty "tdidn' know any such silly things as riddles."

Then they turned to grandma. "Grandma knows riddles—don't you? She'll tell us one,—she always does! Aunt Letty looked up at their grandma,—it was their "other grandma" with whom she was not much acquainted, for it was the first time she had come to visit her grandchildren since Aunt Lettie had the care of them,—Aunt Letty looked up with surprise. "I don't believe your granmother wants to be troubled led with such silly things as riddles," she said gravely.

"Grandma has some silly things hid away for the children I'm afraid," said she, smiling. "I'll tell them a riddle—the oldest one written down."

"The oldest riddle in the world!" cried the children, "Oh grandma, where did you find it?"

"No matter where I found it," she said, "till I tell you what it is."

Then she told them that old, old riddle "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

Only she told it in a rhyme, in this way;

> "Out of the eater there came forth meat,
> And out of the strong came that which was sweet."

The children puzzled their heads over this riddle a long time, and at last had to give it up. They had not the least idea what it could be about.

Grandma's face wore a quiet smile all the time, and when they had given it up, she said, "Well, Willie, go and bring the stand here with the great Bible on it."

"O grandma, but please tell us the riddle first," they all cried.

"No, dears, I am not going to tell it to you, but I am going to let you read it out of the Bible.

"A riddle in the Bible," they all cried with wonder. What could grandma mean?

"Now Willie," said grandma, "please find the fourteenth chapter of Judges.

Willie began to say "Genesis, Exodus" and so on till he got to Judges, where he quickly found

the chaper. Aunt Lotty began to smile too, for she knew about grandma's Bible riddle.

"Now read that chapter aloud," said grandma" and see what a curious story it tells."

So Willie read about the strong young man Samson, and how passing through the vineyards he killed the lion and left him dead in the way; and then afterward the bees lodged their honey in the lion's carcass and Samson ate of it and gave it to his father and mother. He read on about Samson's marriage and his marriage-feast and the thirty young men who came to keep it, "for so used the young men to do."

"And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty changes of garment. But if ye cannot declare it me then shall you give me thirty sheets and thirty changes of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle that we may hear it. And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." Then Willie read the account of Samson's false wife betraying him, and how the young men came on the seventh day saying, What is sweeter than honey, and what is stronger than a lion? and how Samson's anger was kindled because of their treachery, and how he killed their friends, who were his enemies, and robbed them that he might pay his forfeits.

The Bible had a large picture of the strong young Samson, standing in the vineyard among the grapes, with the slain lion in his path. The children looked at it with great interest, and said how splendid it must be to be strong enough to kill a lion, but they thought Samson's riddle had a very sad end.

Aunt Lotty made her apology to Grandma in this way, "Riddles don't always go with silly words, I see. Samson's was not very wonderful, but he had wit enough left, it seems, to judge Israel for twenty years."

"Yes," said grandma, "he himself, with his strength and weakness, his wit and folly, furnishes more of a riddle than ever his lion did."

H. A. B.

CONSCIENCE is, at once, the sweetest and most troublesome of guests. It is the voice which demanded Abel of his brother, or that celestial harmony which vibrated in the ears of the martyrs, and soothed their sufferings.

Three little Hay-Makers.

OUT in the summer sunshine
We tossed the summer's hay,
Three careless, happy children,
And work was sweet as play;
Sweet for the blossoming clover,
And the red of the cardinal's creast—
Sweet for the hedge lark's gurgling song
And hints of her hidden nest.

Now in the shady coolness,
Of the bowery haunts of June,
We whiled away with song and play,
The golden afternoon;
And now, in the wake of the mowers
We raked the green winrow,
Till o'er the uplands's woody creast
The sun dipt red and low.

In the edge of the tangled convert,
Where the lush blackberries hung,
Like jeweled pendulum to and fro
A meadow spider swung;
And climbing out of the shadow,
At the feet of the spicy ferns,
A wild rose held to the snnshine
The dew in her crimson urns.

And low in the tuft of daisies,
With grasses woven round,
In the nest of cunning fashion,
Three speckled eggs were found;
Translucent spheres of beryl,
Freaked with purple and brown,
And we laughed aloud in thoughtless glee
As we beat the tall grass down.

But ere our boyish mischief,
A sun-burnt hand had stirred
To grasp the tempting treasure—
"Boys, think of the mother bird,"
Said Ruth, our little sister,
Uplooking in sad surprise,
Her red lips all a-tremble,
And tears in her big blue eyes.

"Boys, think of the mother birdie,
And the pain in her tender breast,
When she finds in the trampled daisies
A rifled and broken nest."
And busily digging our bare toes
Deep in the balmy grass,
We cowered, with downcast faces,
Before our little lass.

The springs have bloomed and faded,
The summers waned away
Since out in the happy sunshine
We tossed the fragrant hay;
And under the silver daisies,
And the clover white and red,
Our little sister lieth
At peace in her narrow bed;
But the tender truth she taught me,
Beside the ground bird's nest,
Still blooms like flowers, amid the cares
And crimes of a world-worn breast.

Register.

Vacation.

It is almost vacation time again, and hundreds of our little readers will be out of school, and perhaps away from home for two long months. We are reminded of it by finding in our copy drawer some letters about last summer's vacation, that came too late to be in season then. The first is from a very little girl in this city, who sent it back from the mountains to her teacher; and we begged it for its quaint little-girl writing and spelling and grammar. Some little girl who reads it may learn from its mistakes how to do better. The other is from one of the children also, and was written on purpose for the MYRTLE. May we not hear from many such in this way this summer?

THE LETTER FROM THE LITTLE GIRL.

MY DEAR TEACHER I now sit down to answer your letter I was very much pleased when I got it I hope you are haveing a nice time to your Uncles My Aunt Uucle and my two cousins went up to melvin vilage to Church with the black span I went last sunday and they went this sunday and I stayed at home they have just gone acrossed the pond in the boat to church I took a boat ride last evening after supper I go up the road most every night after supper and get all the berries I want to eat I have not been sick since I came up here we have had two visitors but one went away yesterday my Aunt Hellen came up thursday I guess my Mother will come up before I go back we have got a little pig and two old ones I have got a little chicken I call her Pertie she has got a little cap upon her head we have got two old cows and three little calves blueberries are going a way and black snaps are comeing and they is going to be plenty of blackberries this year we have got sixty four or seventy nice fat turkeys I suppose they is plenty of berries where you are My Uncle has got a very large blackberries ground I played croquet over to South Boston once but I have forgotten now I think it is a very interesting game for any one that knows how you can look out on the pond from the front door it is a beautiful pond to look out on every one that comes here likes here because they can take a sail when they want to I have four Cousins, up here two boys and two girls, they are very jolly ones, they took a sail up to Centre harber yesterday, they had a splendid time, there are a great many boarders to Wolfborough from the City Wolfbourough is where the great lake is winnipisoco the boat comes in there it is splendid rideing on the boat coming up it is so cool they has been a great many showers up here this year there are not many apples I have not been any wheres to day I have a little Cousin Tommy he had a dog named Hero he had a cart to hitch the dog in and Hero would take him round any wheres and get potatoes he would take them home and he ran a way from home I have got to go back in three weeks and go to school again how long do you propose to stay to your Uncles.

I dont like to go back I am having such a nice time I can't think of much more to write I send my love to your Dear little Cousin tell her I should like to see her very much I wish I could see you.

Dear Teacher write soon and I will answer it Good Bye from your affectionate friend. SUSIE.

MY RIDE BACK TO THE CITY.

It was only a short one of about one hundred and twenty miles, and no doubt but many a one passing over the same route has said, "how dull," but there is many a beautiful spot to view, that will remain in ones memory for many a day if they only love the beauties of Nature. There may not be as many fine residences as many roads would present, still many a house where no doubt love dwells, and that is far better than wealth.

I fain would have gazed long on some of the scenes if the train would have only stopped.

The dear old Conneticut River winding in such graceful curves, looking so lovely, so beautiful, as the sun's rays fell glistening upon its bright waters. How very many love it and praise its beauties!

In one place I saw many logs that had come a long way in the water; men, with hard labor, keeping them from the shore and Islands. Some were drawn up from the water, others only partly, and I thought as I saw them lying there it would make a pretty picture that many would admire although, perhaps, not as picturesque as some scenes.

Off on high places I could see fine residences, and thought, doubtless from the dust of the city some have spent the past excessively warm days in such places, where the wind that lower would not be felt had fanned their heated brows.

One pretty scene was a large duck with many smalle ones, venturing in water. She seemed to be watching the little ones; but the train went by so quickly I could hardly guess at her thoughts.

There was a pleasant scene enacted at nearly every station as friends met friends that had been absent. Such joy as was pictured on their faces at their return. O, was there a thankfulness at heart, that they had been spared to come back to them.

But what I most admired was—I don't know how to describe it so you can imagine how they looked; but without doubt, you have all seeen just such places;—and you must turn memory back to them.—The grass so green, trees all around, and a beautiful little stream of water bubbling along, how refreshing, how beautiful, how lovely, how inviting! In some of these spots there were people to appreciate them, for seats had been made, and small benches, and in one place I saw several small children playing, with much of happiness on their faces as they stopped in their play to gaze for a moment at the passing train. I threw them a kiss with an inward prayer that they might always be as happy as their faces showed them to be at the present time.

There were streams crossed, and Waldon pond came also in view where, no doubt, many of you have passed happy hours with friends you love. It looked inviting for a sail, but there did not seem to be the opportunity for me just then.

On, on, we came, and soon in the distance the State House was to be seen looming toward the sky; and, numerous church spires, all around the city soon came in view, and I knew that I was in Boston. And hoping the days will pass as happily as they have in the country, I dommence city life again, wishing you all have passed as pleasant a vacation as myself.

ONE OF YOU.

A Flower Show.

All the spring men and horses have been busy in a section of the Common, making what looked like an immense flower-bed. Loads and loads of earth have been carted, squares, triangles and circles laid out with turfings between, a board paling has held it all in, and then a great tent was put up over it. What did it all mean? We walked by it every day with increasing wonder and no increase of knowledge. But most things come to light by patient waiting, and now we have found out. This morning come tickets from the Mass. Horticultural Society saying, "Admit the Bearer to the RHODODENDRON SHOW on Boston Common. Open on June 5th, to continue two weeks." That is what is to be in the flower-beds under the great tent, and we shall be sure to go, and see, and then tell you all about it.

Lives of the Apostles.

LESSON XV.—JOHN.

Question. — Who stood by the cross when Jesus was suffering crucifixion?

Answer. — John xix. 25. 26.

Q. — What charge did Jesus give John from the cross?

A. — John xix. 27.

Q. — Although Peter had denied his Master, with whom does he seem to have associated between the death and resurection of the Savior?

A. — John xx. 2.

Q. — When news was brought them that the body of Jesus could not be found, what did John and Peter do?

A. — John xx. 4.

Q. — Which of them reached the sepulchre first?

A. — John xx. 4.

Q. — Who went into the sepulchre next after Peter?

A. — John xix. 8.

Q. — Where did Jesus show himself to John, after his resurection?

A. — John xxi. 1, 2.

Q. — What had Peter proposed to do?

A. — John xxi. 3

Q. — Did the other disciples join him?

A. — John xxi. 3

Q. — Did they succeed in catching fish?

A. — John xxi. 3.

Q. — At what time of the day did Jesus appear to them?

A. — John xxi. 4

Q. — Did the disciples recognize him?

A. — John xxi. 4.

Q. — What led John to believe that it was Jesus?

A. — John xxi. 6.

Q. — To whom did John tell this belief?

A. — John xxi. 7.

NOTE. It is probable that all this occurred in the early morning, and that the form of Jesus on the shore, could only be dimly seen in the morning twilight.

Q. — How far was the fishing boat from the land when Jesus was discovered on the shore?

A. — John xxi. 8.

Note. This was about two hundred and fifty or three hundred feet.

Q. — When Peter was informed of Christ of the things he should suffer, what inquiry did he make respecting John?

A. — John xxi. 20, 21.

Q. — What did Jesus say in reply to the question?

A. — John xxi. 22.

Q. — What impression did this answer of Jesus make upon the disciples?

A. — John xxi. 23.

Hidden Seed

Enigma.

I am composed of 54 letters
My 42, 21, 35, 46, 42 was king of Israel.
My 31, 36, 40, 42 is what every one ought to be.
My 44, 45, 16, 49, 27, 10, 15 was stoned to death.
My 52, 53, 7, 34, 43, 33, 38 is a book in the Old Testament.
My 18, 10, 28, 24, 16, 20, 2, is a book in the New Testament.
My 31, 46, 42, 16, 3, 51 delivered Israel from the hands of the Midianites.
My 4, 1, 17, 27, 34, 54 is a parent.
My 10, 48, 49, 18, 47, 50, 20, 16, 8 is a river in Asia.
My 32, 37, 30, 18 gleaned in the fields.
My 5, 19, 11, 2, 13, 43 is the birthplace of Saul.
My 12, 41, 29, 26, 27 is what we are told to buy.
My 42, 9, 46, 7, 6, is a river in Europe.
My 22, 10, 8, 26, 10, 14, 42, 25, 22 14 a space of time.
My 23, 41, 10, 1, 17, 27 is a garland.
My 39, 10, 53, 49, 46, 51, 31 is a token of sorrow.
My whole can be found in Proverbs.

C. O. B.

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